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TAGS: [PARM](#) [MTCRE](#) [PREL](#) [ETTC](#) [KS](#) [SY](#) [CH](#)
SUBJECT: (S) ROKG PLANS TO ALLOW SYRIA-BOUND STEEL
TRANSSHIPMENT

REF: A. SEOUL 2271

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 104089
[1](#)C. SEOUL 2026

Classified By: A/DCM Joseph Y. Yun, Reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#)1. (S) On August 31, Kim Jae-woo, Deputy Director of the Disarmament and Nonproliferation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, informed poloff that the ROKG had decided to allow the transshipment of Syria-bound steel that had been seized by ROK authorities in June. Kim said that the Chinese government had finally concluded the investigation that the ROKG had requested in July (as reported reftel A). Kim explained that the Chinese investigation determined that the Chinese company involved was the Manufacturing Construction Factory (MCF), not a WMD-related entity. Kim said that based on the Chinese government's investigation results, the ROKG found no cause to continue holding the steel shipment. Kim said he did not know when the shipping company planned to ship the steel to Syria, only that the ROKG had released it for shipment as of August 30. Kim also indicated that a request from the Israeli Embassy may have prompted the ROKG's initial seizure of the steel in June. Kim shared that the Israeli Embassy had earlier demarched his division and told the ROKG that they believed the Syrian end-user of the steel was the Scientific Studies Research Center (SSRC), an entity of proliferation concern.
VERSHBOW